

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-02 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7083

NASA HQS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0541

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TSPA NASA MA US

SUBJECT: NASA NEGOTIATIONS

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED NOTE FROM MOFA MARCH 27 WHICH INDICATED THAT GOMR WAS PREPARED TO RESUME NASA DISCUSSIONS BUT REFERRED BACK TO 1973 POSITION OF FOREIGN MINISTER ON RENTAL ISSUE AS RAISED "DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO U.S. IN 1973." POSITION TAKEN BY NOTE IS THAT QUESTION OF ARREARS STILL EXISTS FOR RENTAL OF STATION FOR PERIOD 1963 TO 1973 IN AMOUNT OF 200 MILLION FMG PER YEAR (ABOUT \$1 MILLION PER YEAR) SINCE PREVIOUS NEGOTIATIONS DID NOT RESULT IN DEFINITIVE ACCORD. NOTE ALSO SAYS, HOWEVER,

THAT "PAYMENT OF ARREARS IN EYES OF MILITARY DIRECTORY DOES NOT PREJUDICE FUTURE STATUS OF NASA STATION, SUCH STATUS BEING UNDERSTOOD BY MALAGASY SIDE TO BE SECOND STEP IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN TWO PARTIES." NOTE CONCLUDES THAT MALAGASY SIDE "DISPOSED TO STUDY ANY CONSTRUCTIVE AMERICAN PROPOSALS CONCERNING THESE PROBLEMS."

2. EMBASSY COMMENT: EMBASSY SEES AMBIGUOUSLY WORDED NOTE AS NEGOTIATING POSITION, NOT ABSOLUTE DEMAND. CHAIRMAN OF MILITARY DIRECTORY GENERAL ANDRIAMHAZO MAY HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO ACCEPT REOPENING OF RENTAL QUESTION TO APPEASE OTHER MEMBERS OF MILITARY DIRECTORY AFTER RESTORATION OF NASA COMMUNICATIONS WHICH SOME MEMBERS OF DIRECTORY

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HAD HOPED TO USE AS BARGAINING CHIP IN NEGOTIATIONS.

ALTERNATIVELY, NOTE MAY BE INDIVIDUAL EFFORT BY FORMER
FONMIN RATSIRAKA THAT HE HAS IMPOSED ON MOFA, WITHOUT
GENERAL'S FULL KNOWLEDGE, IN VIEW OF LATTER'S PREOCCUPATION
WITH TRIAL OF REBELS. IN EITHER CASE, EMBASSY BELIEVES WE
SHOULD WAIT UNTIL THERE IS OPPORTUNITY FOR ACCESS TO
GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO TO OBTAIN BETTER READING ON
SIGNIFICANCE OF NOTE AND ON GOMR POSITION. GIVEN
ANDRIAMAHAZO'S GENERAL INACCESSIBILITY DURING TRIALS
NOW IN PROGRESS, WE BELIEVE ACCESS NOT POSSIBLE UNTIL WE
ARE READY TO DISCUSS FURTHER MILITARY AND ECONOMIC MATTERS
IN WHICH HE INTERESTED.
MENDENHALL

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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